

Citizens qualified to elect their representatives form the electorate. Its size and scope are determined by law. Generally, the right to vote or franchise is not extended to minors and to those of unsound mind and foreigners. There is the view that there cannot be universal suffrage in the sense that franchise should be extended to all; franchise is not an inherent right of man but a sacred right of man which requires an informal exercise of judgement. The modern principle is that every adult man and woman, if not disqualified by the laws of the state, should exercise the right of voting. The creation of the electorate is perhaps the only way in which indirect democracy can be practised.

The Parliament or the legislature or the assembly is the most important organ of a democratic state, and the executive and the judiciary cannot function until the legislature has functioned. The Parliament has legislative and deliberative functions. It is a law-making body. The executive has a direct hand in the making of the laws. The cabinet discuss the proposal to introduce a bill on the initiation of a minister and if it is accepted by the Council of Ministers or the Cabinet, it is introduced in the Parliament. It is the duty of the minister concerned to pilot the bill through the deliberative process and see that it is finally passed. The Parliament is a forum where thinking is done and matters are debated. This deliberation is, in fact, at the heart of democratic polity.

All those officers of the government, whose business it is to put the laws passed by the legislature into practice form the **Executive**. But it is customary to use the term in a narrow sense to include only the Chief Executive Head of the State and his advisers and ministers. The policies and programmes implemented by the permanent civil service. In its broader sense, the executive includes the civil service concerned with the work of administration. Each department of administration is headed by a minister who ensures that his department

pursue a definite policy and direction. The members of the civil service are not involved in party policies. Their knowledge and experience help the minister to shape policies.

Administration of justice is the function of the **Judiciary**. It guards the rights of the individual citizen and protects these rights from encroachments. The fact that prompt administration of justice prevails not only ensures his liberty but also maximises it. Courts are agencies for the decision of disputes between individuals and between individuals and the state, and for the trial of persons accused of crime. Courts perform various other functions. Courts participate in the determination of law. They prevent infractions of law and the violation of rights. In a democracy, the judiciary is independent; it cannot be influenced by the executive. The independence of the judiciary is essential to uphold the rights of the people and to protect the minorities against the tyranny of the majority.

One of the most fundamental characteristics of democracy is the **Rule of Law**. First, by the Rule of Law, it is meant that no man can be punished or lawfully made to suffer except for a distinct breach of the law established in a legal manner before the ordinary courts of the land. Secondly, it means not only no man however important is above the law but that every man is subject to the ordinary law of the land.

#### Conditions Necessary for Democracy

For democracy to prevail certain conditions are necessary. People should have the democratic will. They should be conscious of their rights and their responsibilities. They should be capable of rational conduct and must participate fully in the affairs of the state. They should have the courage to criticise the government, for "to articulate is its very life; to numb its demise". Democracy also involves fellowship, a feeling of fraternity so that the common aim of the welfare of the state could be achieved. Society should be one of equals and should not be divided on the basis of religion, birth or wealth. The absence of harmony ensures equality of opportunity and social justice. Since democracy is the rule of the majority,